

Standard 4-6 The student will demonstrate an understanding of the Civil War and its impact on America.

4-6.2: Summarize the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad before and during the Civil War, including those of Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sojourner Truth, and William Lloyd Garrison. (H, P)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

Previous /Future Knowledge:

In 3rd grade, students explained the reasons for South Carolina's secession from the Union, including the abolitionist movement, states' rights, and the desire to defend South Carolina's way of life (3-4.3).

In 8th grade, students will explain the impact of key events leading to South Carolina's secession from the Union, including the nullification crisis and John C. Calhoun, the Missouri Compromise, the Tariff of 1832, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and subsequent armed conflict, the *Dred Scott* decision, the growth of the abolitionist movement, and the election of 1860 (8-3.2).

In United States history, students will compare the social and cultural characteristics of the North, the South, and the West during the antebellum period, including the lives of African Americans and social reform movements such as abolition and women's rights (USHC 4.1).

It is essential for students to know:

The **abolitionist movement** developed because of the leadership of many individual Americans. Although the abolitionist movement kept the issue of slavery at the forefront of national conversation, abolitionists did not significantly impact the actions of the national government. In fact, the national government continued to protect slavery. It is also important that students understand that most Northerners were *not* abolitionists. Indeed, many Northerners opposed the work of the abolitionists. However, the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement eventually contributed to the secession of the South from the Union and the Civil War that ultimately led to the abolition of slavery. [The names below are arranged in order of their appearance in the abolitionist movement and demonstrate how the movement intensified as the argument between free and slave states intensified.]

William Lloyd Garrison was the publisher of an abolitionist newspaper known as *The Liberator*. Garrison used the newspaper to tell everyone that slavery was wrong and should be abolished immediately. He and others formed the American Anti-slavery Society, which published books and papers advocating the emancipation of all slaves. Garrison's newspaper was banned in the South. Many Northerners also opposed his views and he was often harassed.

Sojourner Truth was the first African American woman to gain recognition as an anti-slavery speaker. She was born a slave in New York but was freed through gradual emancipation. She had a powerful speaking style and she drew large audiences when she lectured about slavery and women's rights. President Abraham Lincoln appointed her as a counselor to the freedmen in Washington during the Civil War.

Frederick Douglass taught himself to read and write while he was a slave. He escaped slavery and became an eloquent spokesman for the abolitionist movement. Douglass published an antislavery newspaper, known as *The North Star* and wrote his autobiography telling of the conditions of slavery. Once the Civil War started, Douglass encouraged President Lincoln to emancipate the slaves and worked

to recruit Northern African Americans for the Union Army. After the war, he continued to fight for the rights of African Americans and women.

Harriet Tubman was an escaped slave who became one of the most successful “conductors” of the Underground Railroad. The **Underground Railroad** was not a real railroad but a chain of homes where escaped slaves could ask for help, find shelter for the night or catch a ride to the next stop. This chain of safe houses ran from the South to Canada where slaves could start a new life. Tubman is known as the “Moses” of her people because she led more than 300 slaves out of the South, including South Carolina, to freedom.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was the author of the book *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Stowe’s book became a best seller and revealed the cruelty of slavery to many Northerners. Stowe wrote the book in response to the stronger Fugitive Slave Act that was passed as part of the Compromise of 1850. During the Civil War, Stowe often disagreed with President Lincoln because of his concern with preserving the unity of the nation and his need to postpone freeing the slaves.

John Brown was an abolitionist who migrated to Kansas after the Kansas-Nebraska Act declared that the territory would decide by popular sovereignty whether it would be slave or free. In Kansas, Brown and his sons participated in the violence that gave the territory the name “Bleeding Kansas”. In his most infamous action, John Brown led a raid on the United States arsenal at Harper’s Ferry in Virginia in hopes of capturing guns and leading a slave revolt. John Brown’s Raid was unsuccessful. He and his followers were captured by federal troops under the leadership of General Robert E. Lee. As a result of his actions, he was tried, found guilty of treason and hanged. John Brown was hailed as a martyr by many Northern abolitionists but he raised great fear among Southerners and further divided the North and the South.

It is not essential for students to know:

Students do not need to know the life stories of these abolitionist leaders. Nor do they need to read books published by these authors. Students do not need to know about the other actions of abolitionists such as the creation of the Liberty Party. They do not need to know about the Grimke sisters or that the women’s rights movement grew out of some women’s frustrations about not being able to act politically against slavery.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments will require students to **summarize** the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad. Student should be able to **explain** the role played by each of the abolitionists listed including William Lloyd Garrison, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and John Brown.